



For Immediate Release

March 31, 2020

St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital is reporting its first death in connection to COVID-19. We express our deepest sympathies to the patient's family at this difficult time.

The patient was a female in her late 80s with no travel history. The health care team followed appropriate infection control protocols and practices throughout the patient's treatment, including appropriate patient isolation and personal protective equipment (PPE).

The safety of patients, staff and physicians is priority, and STEGH has implemented various protective measures, including:

- Ramping down all non-essential activity including elective surgeries and other non-emergent clinical activity, to help build capacity;
- Restricting all visitors, with limited exceptions on a case-by-case basis;
- Reducing the number of entrances for staff and patients and actively screening everyone that enters the hospital;
- Adhering to strict provincial safety requirements for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Erecting tented areas outside of the Emergency Department to provide additional space for triage before patients enter the Emergency Department.

As the number of cases in neighbouring communities continues to grow, it is important that we continue follow the advice of Public Health Ontario, including social distancing, frequent hand washing, avoiding unnecessary trips out of the house, and self-isolation after out-of-country travel or contact with a known or probable case of COVID-19.